



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 24, 2016 6:30 p.m.**

### **Contact:**

**Bill Swartley, NCFS - ICP Fire Information Center – 919.218.3179**

**Eric Muecke, NCFS – ICP Fire Information Center – 828-432-7920**

**Bonnie Strawser, Alligator National Wildlife Refuge – 252.216.8667**

## **Whipping Creek Road Fire, Dare and Hyde Counties**

### **US 264 Now Open; Fire Caused by Right-of-Way Operation**

Unified Incident Commanders Smith and Ledbetter of the Whipping Creek Road Fire announced the section of US 264 between Stumpy Point and Englehard is now open. The road was closed today so that air tankers could drop water on the fire where it approaches the highway. In days to come, increased fire or smoke behavior along the highway may cause fire officials and local law enforcement to close the highway at any time. The NCDOT maintains a website that overviews road openings and closures on a real-time basis that can be accessed at:

<http://tims.ncdot.gov/tims/RegionSummary.aspx?re=8>

Fire managers recommend that drivers check the NCDOT website before traveling this route. Residents and visitors traveling US 264 should be aware that firefighters and their equipment will be working along the highway and adjust their speed accordingly. Drivers should also be looking ahead for any utility poles or power lines that may have fallen on the highway. Remember to treat all downed power lines as “live wires” and keep a safe distance.

North Carolina Forest Service law enforcement also released the cause of the fire today. The accidental ignition resulted from a right-of-way maintenance operation. Mowing or bush-hogging of fine flashy fuels such as dead grass or leaves can be a source of ignition when stones or other metal debris is struck by the mowing blades.

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